United Nations E/2008/6–E/ICEF/2008/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 December 2007

Original: English

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2008
Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
First regular session 2008
29 January-1 February 2008
Item 10 of the provisional agenda**

Annual report to the Economic and Social Council***

Summary

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) prepares the present report annually to comply with General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in accordance with the request from Member States for greater harmonization and coordination. The report also complies with decision 1995/5 of the Executive Board of UNICEF on the format and content of the annual report to the Economic and Social Council. The report provides information about the direction UNICEF is taking to work in closer partnership with other members of the United Nations system to ensure that development assistance produces sustainable results for children.

* E/2008/100 (to be issued).
** E/ICEF/2008/1.
*** The present document was submitted late because of the need for internal consultations.

07-65536 (E) 150108

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides information about the direction UNICEF is taking to promote child rights and ensure that sustainable results for children are achieved in closer partnership with other members of the United Nations system, as well as with Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others concerned about the well-being of children.

2. For UNICEF, the best path to achieve the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals, Millennium Declaration, *A World Fit for Children* and national goals lies in working more effectively and efficiently with Governments, United Nations organizations, civil society and many other partners in development. There are clear gains to be made in such collaboration, including for harmonization and greater coherence in United Nations development assistance at country and global levels. This has led to significant results in several areas: For example, the estimated number of children who die before age 5 has declined to 9.7 million. This represents a 60-per cent decrease in the rate of child mortality since 1960. Similarly, a global partnership that was committed to reducing measles deaths by 50 per cent over a six-year period. Recent results showed a 68-per cent reduction globally, and a 91-per cent reduction in sub-Saharan Africa, between 2000 and 2006. Likewise, efforts to end child labour have achieved considerable progress: Child labour was reduced by 11 per cent from 2002 to 2006; the most hazardous forms of child labour were reduced by 26 per cent.

3. Other important gains include a sharp decline in the number of polio cases (since 2002) and an increase in primary school enrolment. There are improvements in breastfeeding practices and access to insecticide-treated nets in malaria-affected areas. Nonetheless, major challenges remain.

4. The impetus for cooperation and collaboration is shown in the "Delivering as One" approach that increasingly characterizes United Nations country team efforts. This past year, the United Nations family collaborated in a more coherent and harmonious way in countries developing new Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). UNICEF is an active, and sometimes lead, partner in these processes, promoting improved results for children. With strong emphasis placed on poverty reduction and achievement of goals for children, UNICEF uses its convening power to ensure that the rights of children and women are reflected in all goal-related actions. Among the 2007 achievements was the collaborative development of a common fund mechanism to mobilize resources for the "One" programme in the eight pilot "Delivering as One" countries.

5. As part of its culture of continuous improvement of its operations, UNICEF initiated reviews of human resources, business processes, supply function, and engagement with partnerships in civil society as well as a broader organizational review. That review identified key shifts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of UNICEF to deliver results for children. The recommended shifts include sharpening programme focus; realigning structures and systems to deliver quality results; strengthening the knowledge base; enhancing work with partners; and providing the needed coordination, support and oversight to foster greater collaboration and coherence.

II. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

A. Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Results of pledging events for 2007 regular resources

6. Combined pledges received during the United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2006 and the eighth UNICEF pledging event held during the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 2007 amounted to $260 million from 49 donor Governments, including both developed and programme countries. During the two pledging events, multi-year pledges were made in the amount of $189 million for the period 2007-2009, with a modest increase in unconditional multi-year pledges for regular resources. Detailed results of pledging events are available in the Executive Board report (E/ICEF/2007/7/Rev.1).

Regular resources income as of September 2007

7. As of September 2007, UNICEF had recorded regular resources income of $533 million from Government donors and intergovernmental agencies against the medium-term financial plan projections of $527 million. Total regular resources income from all sources for 2007 is projected to be $1,053 million, with the level of Government regular resources contributions in line with financial plan estimates. The current ratio of regular to total resources is 30 per cent.

8. The triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) called on donors to increase core and regular funding to operational activities of the United Nations system. Core funding through regular resources allows UNICEF to fulfil both its operational and normative roles, and provides the necessary flexibility to maximize the impact of joint programming and pooled funding arrangements with other United Nations system agencies.

Other resources

9. Contributions to other resources recorded from Governments as of September 2007 were $764 million. Of this amount, $556 million went to other resources-regular (non-emergency), against a financial plan of $352 million, while $208 million went to other resources-emergency, against a financial plan of $371 million. As of 30 September 2007, total income from other resources from all sources was $1,284 million, which was 66 per cent of the plan target of $1,947 million.

10. The projected increase in other resources in 2007 is the result of fundraising efforts for thematic funds. Thematic contributions are funds contributed for priorities of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), allowing UNICEF discretion in the time frame for spending the funds and in the allocation of funds for specific purposes Characterized by low administrative costs, simplified annual reporting and greater flexibility, such funds respond to programme priorities and allow for longer-term planning and more sustainable results. Thematic funding has also contributed to increased flexibility and predictability of other resources and now represents a significant and growing portion of total funding. Between 2004, when thematic funds were introduced, and 2006, the ratio of thematic to total contributions grew from 8 per cent to 11 per cent, and the amount of thematic

funding more than tripled over the same period (as of 30 September 2007). Since 2003, the total amount of thematic funding received is $1,189 million.

11. Inter-organizational arrangements are another growing resource for UNICEF. These funds are mostly directed to humanitarian responses and include, among other sources, income from various pooled funding mechanisms, such as grants from the United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs Central Emergency Response Fund ($78 million); multi-donor trust fund contributions for the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia ($63.5 million); Iraq trust fund grants ($27 million) and funds from the United Nations Trust Fund on Human Security ($1 million). As of September 2007, $194 million had come from such sources, already exceeding the 2006 total of $178 million. Funding through this category is expected to grow in coming years. To a certain extent, this trend is the result of a shift in the funding approach of some major donors towards more pooled funds. Assessment so far indicates that the process of pooling funds could be further streamlined by moving away from a project-based approach to a more integrated programme approach. This, in turn, would reduce transaction costs, increasing the amount of funds available for assistance.

12. As of September 2007, UNICEF had recorded $398 million in other resources devoted to humanitarian assistance, which represents 31 per cent of total other resources. Through the United Nations humanitarian Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), UNICEF has been relatively successful in mobilizing funding for humanitarian needs. In 2007, 53 per cent of CAP targets were funded. As of September 2007, however, UNICEF had recorded funded levels of only 23 per cent for 'neglected' crises that do not benefit from CAP. Initiatives such as Good Humanitarian Donorship have had a positive effect on funding for humanitarian assistance, but are yet to address the issue of under-funded crises.

13. The 2004 TCPR called for increased predictability of funding for development, including through multi-year contributions. The number and value of such contributions to UNICEF have increased. The predictability of funding, in general, allows strategic priorities to be linked to funding sources. Total future income (unconditional pledges) for 2008-2012 amounts to $442 million: $316 million for other resources and $126 million for regular resources. In addition, the average value of the donor agreements has increased from $1,059 million for each donor agreement in 2006 to $1,177 million in 2007.

14. In the last two years, UNICEF overall income growth has outpaced that of official development assistance (ODA) provided by the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Even after the surge in Indian Ocean tsunami funding in 2005, UNICEF recorded a modest increase of 0.7 per cent in 2006, while ODA recorded a drop of 1.8 per cent (excluding debt relief). OECD/DAC projections for 2007 indicate that ODA will continue to fall. UNICEF expects an overall income increase of about 8 per cent in 2007.

15. UNICEF relies on its partners to provide growth, predictability, stability and reliability of funding to fulfil its mission. The donor community's continued confidence in the work of UNICEF is highly appreciated.

B. Strategic partnerships, including cooperation with the World Bank

16. UNICEF collaborates closely with a wide range of allies in the public and private sectors to accelerate progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other goals for children. These partnerships galvanize commitment and leverage human, technical and financial resources at both the global and country levels.

17. In the area of health, the leaders of eight organizations in health have met to better coordinate and strengthen health systems. This group, includes the World Health Organization (WHO); UNICEF; the United Nations Fund for Population Activities; the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS); the World Bank; the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and the Gates Foundation.

18. Acknowledging the large burden of disease, which poses a barrier to accelerated development in Africa, the African Union Ministers of Health requested UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank to develop an Africa Health Strategy for the strengthening of health systems through improved resources, policies and management. The strategy complements other health strategies and also provides a focus for the convergence of all health initiatives. Such a coordinated response ensures maximum benefit from the resources mobilized and prevents fragmentation and duplication.

19. Through "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS", UNICEF, UNAIDS and partners provide scaled-up support to four interlinked and mutually reinforcing interventions known as "the four P's": prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, treatment of paediatric AIDS, prevention of infection among adolescents and young people, and the protection and support of children affected by HIV/AIDS. By using the four P's, a broad range of actors — including UNAIDS foundations, pharmaceutical companies, donors, researchers and NGOs are being mobilized to achieve gains in each focus area. As a result, many Governments in sub-Saharan Africa are integrating actions to mitigate the impact of AIDS on children into their national policy frameworks. Of note is the steady progress made in Eastern and Southern Africa, home to the majority of new infections in children, where the proportion of pregnant women who are HIV positive and receiving antiretroviral treatment (for prevention of mother-to-child transmission) increased from 11 per cent in 2004 to 31 per cent in 2006. Children infected by HIV have gained greater access to paediatric treatment in the last two years alone. Overall, in middle- and low-income countries, 127, 300 children have been provided with antiretroviral treatment, an increase of almost 80 per cent from the 71,900 figure determined at the end of 2005.

20. The Global Fund is an important partner for UNICEF. UNICEF country offices participate in a Country Coordination Mechanism promoted by the Global Fund. The organization is also very active in supporting procurement activities in several countries in connection to the Global Fund grants activities.

21. UNICEF is the Principal Recipient of Global Fund grants in Somalia and is one of the recipients and partners of the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS in Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Pacific, and the Sudan, and for malaria in Angola.

22. Several partnerships are helping countries to achieve the education-related Millennium Development Goals. One such partnership is the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), coordinated by UNICEF, which is the flagship for girls' education. At country level, the initiative helps to makes country-led efforts more effective by engaging existing mechanisms (such as poverty reduction strategies, and UNDAF frameworks) for education goals. UNICEF is now working with many partners, including with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on child labour, to ensure that various sources of education disparities are identified, quantified and addressed at country level. In addition, UNICEF is a founding partner of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI), which provides resources for the education planning process and reviews the resulting education sector plans in order to bridge funding gaps that remain after national resources and support from in-country donors have been taken into account. UNICEF is the lead coordinating agency in 10 of the 32 countries endorsed so far for EFA-FTI funding support. Through UNGEI, gender and other disparity issues have been mainstreamed in FTI.

23. New partnerships were developed to reach school-age children in emergencies, whether linked to conflicts or natural disasters. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee cluster for education in emergencies, for which UNICEF and Save the Children share the lead, is a good example of joint United Nations-civil society leadership. An Advisory Group has been set up, comprising representative agencies engaged in education in emergencies. Forty countries in emergency or post-crisis situations now benefit from the fund set up through the partnership in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

24. UNICEF continues its work with The Alliance of Youth CEOs, developing a new guidance document on environmental health, which will help youth leaders develop skills to take local action to address the impact of environment problems, including climate change, on children's health. In addition, as part of its partnerships with faith-based organizations, UNICEF continues to work with the Global Network of Religions for Children and World Conference of Religions for Peace to develop a "Toolkit on ethics education for children through interfaith learning" and to initiate work on a study of "Children and world religions".

25. UNICEF is committed to enhanced partnerships as part of humanitarian reform. UNICEF is strongly engaged in the new Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP). Launched by NGOs and heads of United Nations system agencies in July 2006, this forum for strengthening partnership was created to provide a more balanced platform of discussion and collaboration between actors within and outside the United Nations system. UNICEF is supporting the implementation of the GHP "principles of partnerships" in the three pilot countries: Indonesia, Panama and Zimbabwe. UNICEF is also broadening its strategic engagement with humanitarian NGOs, notably through the review of its generic agreement framework for both global and country-level requirements, improvement of its business practices, and promotion of country-level joint planning.

26. In the area of protection of children associated with armed forces and groups, ministerial meetings in Paris in February 2007 and in New York in November 2007 resulted in a commitment by 100 countries to ensure the highest standard of protection for children affected by armed conflict. It

was agreed that a high-level forum among affected countries, donors and international organizations will be established to highlight situations of grave concern and raise resources for this purpose.

27. UNICEF actively supported the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, which was a milestone in child protection. Extensive consultations at the headquarters, regional and field levels in partnership with Governments, NGOs, and other civil society organizations were undertaken to mobilize awareness and action to protect children from violence.

28. A new partnership was formed with Special Olympics International to advocate for and raise awareness of the rights of children with intellectual disabilities. UNICEF also joined UNAIDS in a partnership with the International Cricket Council and used the platforms of the 2007 Cricket World Cup in the West Indies and the 2007 Championships in South Africa for the "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS" initiative. In addition, UNICEF and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) launched Goals for Girls at the 2007 Women's World Cup in Shanghai, China, a campaign that promoted education, gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

29. UNICEF plays a key role in early warning and emergency preparedness activities within the framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and collaborates with a wide range of partners to strengthen common capacity at regional and country levels.

30. In January 2007, the Council of Europe and UNICEF signed a Joint Declaration to reinforce cooperation in policy development and research. UNICEF cooperates with the Council in its three-year programme "Building a Europe for and with Children" in the areas of child rights, violence against children, protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse, juvenile justice and child participation.

UNICEF corporate partnerships

31. UNICEF works closely with private business to identify, design and implement alliances that leverage the strengths of the corporate sector on behalf of the world's children, and encourages companies to adopt socially responsible business practices. Opportunities include efforts driven by multifaceted partnerships, strategic philanthropy, cause-related marketing initiatives, employee-giving programmes, special events, greeting card sales, and support of awareness campaigns and emergency appeals. IKEA partners with UNICEF through integrated approaches to support children and women and their opportunities for learning and development, including through addressing child labour issues. In collaboration with UNICEF, the FTSE Group introduced the first global index series of ethical stocks, FTSE4Good, to monitor private sector environmental sustainability, develop positive relationships with stakeholders, and support universal human rights. UNICEF continues to diversify engagement strategies to work with companies on behalf of children.

Collaboration with the World Bank and other multilateral development institutions

32. UNICEF is expanding its collaboration with multilateral development institutions to leverage resources for children. In 2007, UNICEF partnerships with international financial institutions were further strengthened and resulted in contributions of $27 million, almost four times the 2006 level.

Increasing cooperation with the African Development Bank for education support and reinforced country-level partnerships with the World Bank have been important in this regard.

33. UNICEF and the World Bank are working to further strengthen longstanding collaboration in the areas of social and economic development, and increasing cooperation in humanitarian action and post-conflict situations.

34. Numerous complementarities exist between the areas covered by the UNICEF MTSP and the World Bank's Human Development Network, and there are ongoing policy dialogues in the areas of health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation and child protection. Collaboration in social policy is expanding at global and country levels. Efforts are ongoing to facilitate speedy and efficient collaboration on humanitarian responses and post-conflict situations.

35. During 2007, UNICEF collaborated with the World Bank in organizing two joint global events in New York. One, called "Eyes on the Budget as a Human Rights Instrument", gathered delegates from more than 60 missions to the United Nations and presented country-level examples from Ecuador and the Democratic Republic of Congo to discuss the use of public policies and national budgets as vehicles to investment in children and in realizing their rights The second event, "Eyes on the South as a Knowledge Hub", highlighted how developing countries are a dynamic source of ideas and new knowledge that can benefit developing and developed countries.

36. UNICEF continued to make progress in working with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank for universal birth registration by 2015 in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2015. This has led to the First Latin American Regional Conference on Birth Registration and the Right to Identity, held in Paraguay in August 2007, co-organized by UNICEF, OAS, Plan International and the Government of Paraguay.

37. UNICEF is also strengthening its collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). This cooperation covers a wide range of areas. At the regional level, the Evidence for Action Data Hub in Asia and the Pacific region provides user-friendly, strategic information on HIV and AIDS to policymakers, experts, researchers and programme managers. The project is implemented by UNICEF and UNAIDS in partnership with ADB. UNICEF collaboration with the Bank at the country level covers a wide range of areas, including health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, and protection. UNICEF remains committed to continuing and strengthening this partnership both at regional and country levels.

38. UNICEF also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council of Europe Development Bank to enhance the mobilization and leveraging of resources for children, especially in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Priority areas include young child survival and development, basic education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS and children, and preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse.

C. Capacity development

39. Capacity development and ownership of national development strategies are essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. UNICEF support to national programmes and partner institutions is becoming more upstream, strategic and policy-oriented.

40. Capacity development is viewed as both an outcome and cross-cutting approach in UNICEF-assisted programmes. It remains a common feature of work on child survival, HIV/AIDS, education and child protection and is a growing part of the contribution of UNICEF to policy development at the national level through the sharing of technical experience and expertise.

41. UNICEF contributed to the development of the new inter-agency Common Learning Package on a Human Rights-based Approach to United Nations work at the country level as well as the new United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Policy Position and Toolkit on Capacity Development. In addition, UNICEF will undertake an analysis of its own capacity development approaches to make the necessary adjustments in the next biennium. A focus on capacity development is also reflected in the increased emphasis UNICEF places on the situation assessment and analysis as a contribution to national research and capacity for knowledge-generation on the rights of children and women.

42. Building upon initial lessons from the Accelerated Child Survival and Development programme in West Africa and other large-scale integrated programmes, and following the meeting of all UNICEF Representatives in Africa, which took place in Dakar in November 2006, UNICEF country offices have developed nationally endorsed plans for the following: scaling up work on health-related Millennium Development Goals, including for reduction of child and maternal mortality; expanding the evidence base for integrated community-based programmes; measuring results; and strengthening programme communication and partnerships. Following the All Africa Representatives meeting, more than 40 UNICEF country offices in Africa developed costed scale-up plans together with Governments and key partners. These plans ensure linkages between health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS and water, sanitation and hygiene to contribute to the achievement of all health-related Millennium Development Goals.

43. In the health sector, in partnership with the World Bank and WHO, Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB) was developed to engage all stakeholders in identifying budgeting problems, to propose interventions, and to estimate costs. This method has helped Governments to focus on key interventions related to children, including the allocation of resources. In 2007 a total of 26 countries used the MBB tool for a variety of purposes, from costing National Child Survival Strategies to developing a medium-term expenditure framework, and from needs assessment related to health Millennium Development Goals to developing cost simulations and other budgeting elements of health programmes.

44. Strengthening national technical and technological capacity moved forward on several fronts. Building technical expertise and the use of information technology in national survey work have led to better data collection, including through multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS). Since 1995, when they were first developed to provide critically needed information, these household surveys

have been conducted in 100 countries and territories. The current round, implemented in 2005-2006, provides data from more than 50 countries for 21 of the 53 Millennium Development Goals indicators. The time frame for these surveys has been narrowed from five years to three, to provide more time-sensitive data to guide effective programme planning.

45. DevInfo (originally developed by UNICEF as ChildInfo) is a database system that enables effective management and dissemination of data on human development. Its adaptability has made it an important aspect of capacity-building for data collection and analysis to improve results for children. Countries that adopt DevInfo adapt the database to their own needs and specifications using country-specific branding and packaging options. Since last year, an additional 12 countries have adopted DevInfo, bringing the total number of users to 92 national statistics organizations. More than 20,000 professionals have been trained in the use of DevInfo for improved statistical literacy and database administration, two thirds of them from Governments. DevInfo is distributed royalty-free to all Member States and United Nations system agencies for use on both desktops and the web.

46. For the third consecutive year, the United Nations Statistics Division has adapted *DevInfo* to publish official United Nations data on Millennium Development Goals indicators, known as MDG Info. MDG Info 2007 has been prepared to accompany the Secretary-General's Millennium Development Goals Report 2007, presenting the most up-to-date country-level statistics available in the United Nations as of July 2007 for the global monitoring of progress since 1990 in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

47. Central to achieving positive results for children is the strengthening of the capacity of individuals, groups and organizations to work with the public sector for the reform of national laws and policies on children's rights. One example is policies linked to reducing violence against children. UNICEF is helping to address the dearth of social workers and family services through capacity-building, training and legislative reforms to establish professional social workers organizations and networks.

D. South-South cooperation

48. UNICEF supports South-South cooperation through direct exchanges of information and experience among countries. One expanding area of cooperation involves greater coordination on child protection issues at the municipal level by creating decentralized specialized child rights and child protection councils. Expertise from Latin America and the Caribbean in this area has been offered to countries in other regions. While UNICEF often facilitates the collaboration among countries, the knowledge and experience are provided by jurists, academics and child rights activists themselves.

49. The Government of Brazil, an early leader in the provision of HIV care and treatment to children, has with UNICEF support developed a mechanism to assist and mentor other developing countries. Lacos Sul-Sul, or "South-South Ties", includes Brazil, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste. It involves a common commitment to respond to the HIV epidemic through horizontal exchanges of information and joint elaborations of

strategies. Under Lacos Sul-Sul, Brazilian health personnel, along with UNICEF and UNAIDS, provide medicines, capacity-building, monitoring and other forms of technical assistance. They also mobilize civil society groups around stigma-reduction and HIV prevention and care. All countries where Lacos Sul-Sul has been launched have seen a rapid scale-up of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and HIV treatment services for children as well as adults.

50. The Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health (SEARCH), an NGO based in India's state of Maharashtra, demonstrated that neonatal mortality could be effectively reduced through improved home-based newborn care practices. UNICEF in Eastern and Southern Africa encouraged partners in the area of maternal, newborn and child health to visit SEARCH and the Government's programme on Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Diseases. Subsequently, programme managers in seven countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) and Yemen undertook a two-week orientation session at SEARCH, with each country team developing a plan to introduce home-based newborn care practices in communities in their own countries.

E. Gender mainstreaming

51. There are still major challenges in ensuring that boys and girls have equal access to their rights. Achieving gender equality is essential for the attainment of all the Millennium Development Goals. The UNICEF *State of the World's Children Report 2007* on gender equality heightened advocacy and focused attention on achieving improved gender equality results. Studies on gender issues and better efforts for gender disaggregation in data collection are under way in many countries. For example, the UNICEF-supported study on "Gendering the Tsunami: Women's Experiences from Sri Lanka" revealed the importance of women's entrepreneurial skills for the survival of women and their families following the disaster. UNICEF also supported specific research on gender impacts of new aid modalities with its study on "Gender and equity in Education SWAps in South Asia".

52. Another important partnership is the UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which unites the work of 12 United Nations entities. UN Action aims to improve coordination and accountability, to expand programming and advocacy, and to support national efforts to prevent sexual violence against women and girls and respond to the needs of survivors. An 18-month joint campaign co-led by V-Day (the global movement to end violence against women and girls) and UNICEF was launched in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The campaign aims to raise global awareness and resources to respond to sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo and to mobilize political will to end impunity for such crime. Within the country, efforts to end sexual violence are focusing on scaling up prevention and response, especially by the Government; on changing attitudes, aiming for zero tolerance for sexual violence; and on empowering girls and women both socially and economically.

53. The 2004 TCPR called for stronger commitment and accountability on the part of the United Nations system to achieve gender equality and to further strengthen capacity in mainstreaming gender. UNICEF is supporting a major evaluation of the implementation of its gender policy, to be completed by the end of 2007. The evaluation addresses institutional strengths, weaknesses and good practices

related to gender mainstreaming, including six country studies (Jordan, Mali, Moldova, Nepal, Nicaragua and Uganda). The evaluation's conclusions and recommendations will be shared with the Executive Board at its annual session in June 2008.

54. UNICEF contributes to the UNDG Gender Task Team's efforts to develop tools to strengthen the performance of United Nations country teams (UNCTs) on gender equality. A gender score card has been prepared, comprising a set of indicators that address planning for gender equality, partnerships, UNCT policies and capacities, decision-making, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, quality control, and accountability. Field testing of the score card is under way.

55. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its 2007 session, focused on the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against the girl child. UNICEF worked closely with NGO partners and the Division for the Advancement of Women throughout the session and contributed to the extensive participation of girls.

Gender parity in organizational policy

56. Over the past 15 months UNICEF has made considerable progress in increasing the numbers of women at senior levels. As a result of senior staff appointments, the proportion of International Professional female staff members had reached 48 per cent by November 2007, up from 44 per cent in June 2005. Most of this growth has taken place at the senior most levels, with the proportion of women at the D-2 level growing from 19 per cent in June 2005 to 33 per cent in November of 2007, and at the D-1 level from 33 per cent to 44 per cent. The Gender Parity and Equality Policy and action plan, issued in June 2007, states the organization's commitment to a gender-balanced and gender-friendly workplace that emphasizes a balance between work and personal life.

57. Efforts to increase the retention of women staff members continue. A series of four work-culture forums were held in 2007, providing new input for management leadership training. Gender-based leadership programmes for women and men continue, and graduates of both groups report a strengthening of informal networks and gender perspectives in their leadership. The Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office has successfully piloted a middle-level manager's leadership course, which will now be open to other regions as well.

F. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities for development

58. UNICEF continues to work to implement the recommendations of the 2004 TCPR through its work with the UNDG and in the UNDG Executive Committee. This has involved participation in, and sometimes providing leadership to, working groups at headquarters, regional and country levels. These include groups dealing with the Resident Coordinator system, quality support and assurance of UNDAFs and transition for countries in the post-crisis phase. UNICEF also participates in the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), and its High Level Committees on Management and on Programme. These are critical mechanisms to promote greater coherence throughout the United Nations system, in areas ranging from human resources management, coordination of evaluation policies and practice, to climate change.

59. UNICEF has taken an active role in strengthening the guidelines for the joint programming process, CCAs and UNDAFs and in monitoring and supporting the implementation of joint programmes developed through this process. This collaboration has led to greater coherence and clarity in UNDAF results and a steady increase in the quality of joint programmes.

60. The modified CCA guidelines reflect the importance of a broad analysis of the situation in a country, an analysis that includes inputs from all parts of the United Nations system. UNICEF adds value to this by bringing the human rights and/or gender perspective to the existing analysis, especially focusing on marginalized children. From now on, the Situation Analysis will be a product of UNICEF that contributes to the planning processes of the wider development community. The Situation Analysis in Mozambique, for example, which was conceived as an examination of child poverty, has been used not only by the UNCT but also by the Government and the international community to guide development efforts in the country.

61. UNICEF continues to take part in, and in many cases lead, the introduction of a Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), which streamlines procedures for transferring funds from the United Nations funds and programmes to Government partners. HACT calls for fundamental changes in the way United Nations system agencies work and in their relationship with Government partners. Though these changes are taking longer to implement than anticipated, feedback from country teams suggests that as implementation progresses globally, acceptance increases among Government partners and United Nations system agencies, and the pace of implementation improves. By mid-2007, only 25 countries had fully implemented HACT, but many more are expected to follow by the end of the year.

62. In the effort to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations system, UNICEF has responded strongly to the request of eight Governments to be pilots for "Delivering as One." The central element of this work is to prepare a coherent United Nations programme in support of national development priorities. Rwanda is the only one of the eight pilot countries scheduled to develop its UNDAF during 2007, and, as a result, is the pilot country in which the synergy and coherence of the "One Programme" can most clearly be shown. In other pilot countries, the country teams are working to build coherence by improving the existing UNDAFs. This process is being closely monitored.

63. The pilot countries have also explored ways of increasing coherence in funding, both to reduce competition and increase efficiency in fundraising, and to increase transparency and accountability in the collective United Nations contribution to national development. This has taken the form of a budgetary framework and a common fund. UNICEF has been an active partner in the development of systems and processes for the management of the common fund in the pilot countries. The framework outlines the expected activities in a "One United Nations" programme, and the cost of those activities – and also how much of the required financial resources have already been mobilized. The common fund is set up to fill the funding gap between the already-mobilized and the needed resources to deliver the programme. Mobilization for the fund is a UNCT exercise in which funds are mobilized and allocated according to pre-agreed formulas and processes. Moreover, in the pilot countries, HACT is being adopted by an increasing number of specialized agencies, to ensure the lowest possible overhead expected from Governments in those pilot countries.

64. The eight pilot countries undertook a stock-taking exercise in late 2007 in order to identify progress during the year. The stocktaking had two parts - an overview from the Government, which was sent to the Deputy Secretary-General, and a more detailed listing of accomplishments and challenges prepared by the UNCT in conjunction with the Delivering as One Steering Group in the eight countries. Full-fledged evaluations will be carried out in 2009 (to evaluate the process) and 2011 (to evaluate impact), under the guidance of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

65. An important lesson learned is that the process of increased coherence should be initiated during the programme planning phase, ensuring country leadership and ownership to be emphasized early on. Another lesson is that the extra attention and financial commitments given to the pilot countries require significant staff time for management, which should be incorporated into workplans and budgets.

66. At a global level, a system-wide review of the structure and work of CEB and UNDG identified areas of overlap. This will be addressed through a review of the two current High Level Committees under CEB, and a review of UNDG, which will also become the third High-Level Committee under CEB. UNICEF has been actively engaged in these discussions to ensure that the resulting changes provide enhanced and clearer support to the field, with streamlined and efficient headquarters mechanisms.

67. The Humanitarian Reform agenda focuses on four main strategies, also referred to as "pillars": enhanced leadership, accountability and predictability of emergency response in key gap sectors (clusters); adequate, timely and flexible humanitarian financing Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF); improved humanitarian coordination (strengthened humanitarian coordination); and effective humanitarian partnerships. UNICEF is engaged in each one of these pillars.

68. UNICEF is a global cluster lead organization in Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; co-lead in Education with Save the Children Alliance; lead of the Child Protection sub-cluster under the Protection cluster; and lead of the Data Communications sub-cluster within the Emergency Telecommunications cluster. Tools, guidelines and standards for use by these clusters are being developed and in some cases are being piloted and/or rolled out.

69. UNICEF has made substantial progress in strengthening its decentralized and organization-wide capacity to support clusters (largely through Regional Emergency Advisers and Regional Technical Advisers) and its standby and internal staff rosters. UNICEF instituted a 1-per cent pass-through of global cluster funds to partners for global cluster capacity-building. UNICEF has demonstrated that its own Emergency Programme Funding mechanism complements and strengthens the effectiveness of the Central Emergency Response Fund through its "first-release" capacity, which is then followed-up by CERF and other bilateral funding for "scale-up" of emergency response.

70. Within the context of the humanitarian reform, UNICEF also collaborates on the strengthening of the humanitarian coordinator function which is critical for the success of the reform at country level and proposes candidates for the inter-agency pool for country Humanitarian Coordinators.

Resident Coordinator system

71. There has been a qualitative improvement in the Resident Coordinator system this past year. The Regional Directors Teams (RDTs), which bring together the Regional Directors from the Executive Committee agencies, and several of the specialized agencies working in each region, are now fully functional in all regions. They have assessed the performance of Resident Coordinators, and for the first time, their assessments are being used by the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel, which considers the transfers of Resident Coordinators whose terms in their respective countries have ended. The RDT assessment process now needs to be enhanced by having broader agency representation in deliberations.

72. Ten UNICEF staff members are now serving as Resident Coordinators; four women from UNICEF are either serving as Resident Coordinators or will soon take up a Resident Coordinator position. Of the 10, two staff members are also serving as Humanitarian Coordinators. An additional 14 UNICEF staff members have successfully passed the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre process, 6 of whom are women, and are eligible for positions as Resident Coordinator, Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Common services and simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures and transaction costs and efficiency

73. In the spirit of the TCPR of 2004, the Comptrollers of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme are developing a standard set of financial rules and regulations. Draft financial regulations are nearing completion, and work on harmonizing the financial rules has commenced.

74. In line with these activities, work proceeds on the adoption in 2010 of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, which will further enhance transparency, accountability and governance related to UNICEF resources. In all of these areas, UNICEF works closely with the other parts of the common system through the High Level Committee on Management of CEB.

75. A harmonized format for a results-based biennial support budget has been produced with UNDP and UNFPA. The results-based presentation links the budget more directly to the priorities of MTSP and allocates resources under 16 high-level functions, providing key results and indicators, with baselines and targets. It shifts the focus from the costing of inputs to the costing of results to better indicate organizational performance. The harmonized results-based budget format was presented to the UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards in June 2007. A preliminary draft of the biennial support budget in results-based format was also presented to the UNICEF Executive Board in September 2007. The final proposal for the 2008 support budget will be submitted to the UNICEF Executive Board in January 2008 for review and approval.

76. A review of key business processes, completed in 2007, made a series of recommendations to increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of UNICEF. Steps are under way to improve processes in budgeting, recruiting, travel, procurement and logistics. Some of these include

automating and decentralizing various budget management activities; establishing a web portal so that regional accounting data can be accessed by headquarters; facilitating the access of field staff to policy and process guidelines, through the intranet; and simplifying travel procedures including through collaboration with sister agencies The work being launched on enterprise risk management will also contribute to more streamlined processes based on clear rules and regulations.

G. Evaluation of operational activities

77. In response to an International Peer Review of its evaluation function, UNICEF has prepared a comprehensive Evaluation Policy for consideration by the Executive Board in January 2008. The updated policy takes into consideration the changing international cooperation environment, the recent United Nations Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System, and the findings of the organizational review. UNICEF also conducted an evaluation of its Gender Mainstreaming Policy and of its response to the post-tsunami transition phase in India, Somalia and Thailand. UNICEF participated actively in several inter-agency evaluations: of UNDAF, CERF and the real-time evaluation of the flood emergency response in Pakistan. Along with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the UNICEF Evaluation Office co-chairs the system-wide evaluation of the eight pilots for "Delivering as One". The Evaluation Office also led a performance evaluation of the United Nations Ombudsman Office.

78. UNICEF has chaired the evaluation training working group of UNEG for two years and will continue into early 2008. Based on the competency profiles for United Nations evaluators developed in 2006, UNICEF led the design by UNEG of a Diploma in Evaluation to be offered to United Nations staff and partners by the United Nations System Staff College. The diploma will enable UNEG to give a professional certification to evaluators within the United Nations system. It is expected that this measure will facilitate the implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the harmonization of United Nations system evaluation practices.

79. UNICEF co-sponsored the biennial meetings of the African Evaluation Association in Niger and of the Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Network for Latin America and the Caribbean in Colombia. The organization also contributed as well to the meeting in Moscow of the International Programme Evaluation Network of East European countries.

III. Follow-up to international conferences

Commemorative plenary meeting

80. The year 2007 marked the mid-decade point for the Plan of Action of *A World Fit for Children*. The General Assembly convened a commemorative high-level session from 11 to 13 December on the follow-up of the General Assembly Special Session on Children. The session evaluated progress made on the four key areas of health, education, protection, and HIV/AIDS, and on the goals and strategies that underpin and reinforce the Millennium Declaration and Goals. UNICEF worked closely with the President of the General Assembly and other partners to organize the high-level plenary session as well as two roundtables and numerous side events. More

than 40 delegations included children, several of whom addressed the General Assembly on behalf of their delegations. The event was a milestone in the participation of children - as representatives of all children and as representative of their Governments - and in the attention paid by global leaders to the voices of the young.

81. UNICEF led a systematic review of progress towards the *World Fit for Children* goals, assisted in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on the Special Session's follow-up and produced *Progress for Children*, a statistical review of achievements using the most recent household survey data.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference

82. One issue that children place high on their agenda is climate change. UNICEF participated in the December 2007 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on children. UNICEF released a publication titled *Climate Change and Children*, which discusses the effects of climate change on children's health and development. Many of the main killers of children, including malaria, diarrhoea and malnutrition, are sensitive to global warming. Climate change and children was also the subject of a side event during the General Assembly commemorative session on children hosted by the Government of Greece. UNICEF, along with other agencies, has provided extensive data on energy consumption patterns for New York Headquarters and for staff travel.

83. UNICEF is working with the United Nations Environment Programme, among other partners, and within the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to develop a strategy to promote safe and healthy environments for children. This strategy will focus on measures to prevent and reduce environmental risks to child survival, protection and education, while enhancing the capacities to respond to the needs of children in the event of a humanitarian crisis linked to climate change.

Participation in international treaty implementation on indiscriminate weapons

84. UNICEF is a core member of the United Nations mine action team working to develop a legally binding instrument of international humanitarian law on cluster munitions. The treaty would serve as a critically important safeguard for children, who comprise between one half and two thirds of those wounded or killed by cluster munitions globally.

Incorporation of goals in country development planning

85. By the end of 2006, 50 countries had prepared national plans of action for children, and several of these were prepared with the involvement of children. More than 100 countries have incorporated goals for children in their national plans. Many countries have specific plans for priority areas, including violence against children, sexual exploitation, child labour, AIDS, malaria, and vulnerable children, including orphans.

86. Most national plans of action for children refer to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or to the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State Party reports.

Other human rights instruments, such as ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, are also increasingly recognized as part of the framework of national development. On the other hand, cross-sectoral challenges such as child protection, early childhood development and nutrition are weakly reflected in national development plans.

87. There have been some improvements in the allocation of budgetary resources to services that benefit children in many countries. Aid flows have also improved since the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002, at which developed countries were urged to achieve the target of providing 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for ODA. On a smaller scale, but increasing, is aid from non-governmental sources, estimated in 2005 at around $15 billion. This type of aid tends to be targeted effectively to reach children.

88. Nevertheless, today's flow of aid resources still falls far short of what is needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to finance essential investment in children as anticipated by the outcome of the Special Session. To fill the financing gap for the Millennium Development Goals, total ODA volumes would need to rise from the 2005 level of 0.33 per cent of GNP of wealthy countries to an estimated 0.54 per cent by 2015.

89. Concern that Governments would not reach these targets was raised at the G8 summits in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, in 2006 and in Heiligendamm, Germany, in 2007, and in 2007 by children who held their own Junior 8 Summit (the "J8"). There the young people committed themselves to work for a better world, and urged government leaders to fulfil their promises, old and new. "Together it is possible to make a difference", they said.

IV. Conclusion

90. The journey to 2010 and onward to 2015, the years on which most targets for children converge, will be demanding. In a decade already marked by humanitarian crises and conflicts, the impact of AIDS, growing inequalities and concerns about poverty and climate change, an unprecedented effort is required from Governments and the international community to achieve the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals, Millennium Declaration *A World Fit for Children* and other commitments to children. The progress made is considerable, but significant gaps remain. There must be a collective sense of urgency to meet these goals.